

# News from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **DES Releases Public Health Assessment for Ambient Air Quality in Suncook Village**

Concord, NH – The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Environmental Health Program (DES) is releasing the draft ***Public Health Assessment for Ambient Air Quality in Suncook Village*** today. DES conducted the study after the US Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) approved a citizen petition to examine Suncook's air quality and certain health effects that might be associated with air emissions from the Merrimack Station Power Plant. Air quality and meteorological data used in the report are primarily from a DES air monitoring station located on Exchange Street in Suncook. DES prepared the report under its cooperative agreement with ATSDR.

The Public Health Assessment concludes that the ambient air in Suncook Village does not present a health hazard to the general population. During the two year study period, the Suncook area was in compliance with all National Ambient Air Quality Standards. There were infrequent days (or hours) when air pollution reached levels that could result in adverse health effects among asthmatics and other sensitive groups during outdoor exertion. These air pollution events fall into two categories: 1) sulfur dioxide pollution events which are associated primarily with emissions from Merrimack Station that are transported by strong northwest winds usually during winter; and 2) ozone and small particle pollution events that primarily originate from regional and distant sources and involve long distance transport of pollution by southerly winds in summer.

"We're pleased with the results of this study and are working to make the air we breathe even cleaner" said DES Commissioner Tom Burack. "As a result of state legislation passed last year, Merrimack Station is required to install new pollution control equipment that will further reduce emissions, thereby improving air quality in Suncook as well as throughout the State."

DES will host a Public Meeting to provide an overview of the Public Health Assessment, the conclusions of the report, and to answer any questions on Wednesday, March 21, 2007 at 6:00 pm in the Pembroke Library. DES will accept public comments through April 23, 2007. The Public Health Assessment can be accessed at <http://des.nh.gov/whatsnew.htm> or call (603) 271-4664 or e-mail [eabrams@des.state.nh.us](mailto:eabrams@des.state.nh.us) to request a copy or provide comments.

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